

So, I wanted to come over, thank you all for your very, very important work, and urge you to redouble your efforts as we get down to what will be critical votes in both Houses of the United States Congress.

Thank you all very, very much.

Note: The President spoke at 11:22 a.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Build-

ing. In his remarks, he referred to Carla A. Hills, U.S. Trade Representative; Secretary of Commerce Robert A. Mosbacher; Michael J. Boskin, Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers; Frederick D. McClure, Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs; and President Carlos Salinas de Gortari of Mexico.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez-Ordonez of Spain

March 5, 1991

The President. May I just repeat for our friends from Spain what I said earlier to the first wave, and that is that we on the United States side are very grateful for the cooperation that we've had with Spain regarding the Gulf crisis. And they've been steadfast, solid as a rock. And I am indebted, as I explained to the Foreign Minister, to him and to the Prime Minister and to His Majesty for understanding and support. And Spain was there, and they were very strong, and I am very grateful. And I know the Secretary feels the same way.

So, we're glad to have you here. Glad to see you.

The Foreign Minister. Thank you.

The President. The statement today—was this a regular meeting of Parliament at home?

The Foreign Minister. No, no, this was a special meeting.

The President. Special meeting.

The Foreign Minister. For the end of the Gulf war. It was a debate. We have the support of 90 percent of the Parliament. And he made the statement saying that we would continue providing the good support that we have made from there.

The President. Well, we got it.

The Foreign Minister. —is very good.

The President. That is very important.

And I might also add, I think the cooperation we've had in matters regarding this hemisphere—of course, the respect that Spain has and that your Prime Minister has in Central America and South America is legion. Everybody knows that. But it's—we've got to continue to work together.

We've been so busy with the Gulf that I just don't—have told our side that we don't want to neglect our own hemisphere. And Spain can be a tremendous catalyst for peace and democracy there, where you have already started to be. And every time I go down there, people speak so highly of the Prime Minister and your efforts. I wanted to mention that here, that we want to stay together as much as we possibly can on matters related to this hemisphere.

I'm optimistic about it, although there are some tough economic problems in there right now.

Note: The President spoke at 1:20 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez Marquez and King Juan Carlos I of Spain, and Secretary of State James A. Baker III. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.